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Seventy-second session
Third Committee**

Agenda item 72 (c)

**Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights
situations and reports of special rapporteurs
and representatives**

**Security Council
Seventy-second year**

**Letter dated 20 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative
of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine of 1 September 2017 on the blocking of the activities of the sole temple of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate by the Russian occupation authorities in Crimea (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 72 (c), and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 20 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on blocking the activities of the sole temple of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate by the Russian occupation authorities in Crimea

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine condemns blocking of the activities of the Holy Equal-to-the-Apostles Princes Vladimir and Olga temple, the sole and only acting temple in Simferopol of the Crimean Eparchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, by the occupation authorities on August 31, 2017.

The Russian occupation authorities continue their policy aimed at hindering the activities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) on the temporarily occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and is doing everything possible to stop its activities on the territory of Crimea. The capture of church premises has been carried out on the peninsula, its property is illegally seized, searches are carried out in its premises, and pressure is being exerted on clergymen since the beginning of the occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. Such actions of the occupation authorities are systematic violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms, in particular freedom of conscience and religion, norms of international law.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine demands from the Russian Federation to restore unhindered access of the UOC-KP believers to the temple in Simferopol immediately, to stop religious persecution and interference in the activities of the Crimean eparchy of the UOC-KP and to ensure fulfillment of obligations under international law.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine calls upon the international community, in particular the European Union and its member states, the United States, Canada and other democratic countries, international organizations, in particular the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the OSCE to condemn the attack on the Ukrainian temple in Simferopol.



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**Letter dated 20 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative
of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the comment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine of 8 September 2017 on the groundless arrest by the FSB of the Russian Federation of a citizen of Ukraine, Pavlo Grib (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 72 (c), and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Volodymyr Yelchenko
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 20 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Comment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the groundless arrest of the FSB of the Russian Federation of a citizen of Ukraine Pavlo Grib

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine expresses its strong protest to the Russian side on the groundless arrest on August 25, 2017, of the 19-year-old citizen of Ukraine Pavlo Grib and his imprisonment in Krasnodar, the Russian Federation.

The Ministry strongly condemns the persecution by the Russian authorities of citizens of Ukraine in Russia and abroad, the groundless arrests of Ukrainians, violations of their right to a fair trial and condemnations on fabricated politically motivated cases.

Russia's practice of systematical violation the provisions of the Consular Convention between Ukraine and the Russian Federation regarding timely information on the arrests of Ukrainian citizens (within 3 days from the moment of arrest) and condoning the right of the consul of Ukraine to visit an arrested or convicted compatriot is extremely unacceptable. In the case of the arrest of Pavlo Grib, a message from the FSB Office in the Krasnodar as of August 25, 2017, was sent to the Consulate General of Ukraine in Rostov-on-Don by registered letter only on August 31, 2017 and received by the consular post on September 7, 2017 14 days after the arrest.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine requires the Russian side to provide immediately access for Ukrainian consuls to arrested Ukrainian citizen Pavlo Grib, comprehensive information on the place, reasons and circumstances of his arrest, conditions of detention and to ensure his immediate return to Ukraine.



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**Letter dated 20 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative
of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine of 11 September 2017 on the decision of the Crimean occupation authorities in the case of Ahtem Ciygoz (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 72 (c), and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 20 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the MFA of Ukraine on the decision of the Crimean occupation authorities in the case of Ahtem Ciygoz

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine expresses its resolute protest over the illegal sentence of Ukrainian citizen Ahtem Ciygoz by the Russian occupation authorities on the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to 8 years of imprisonment.

Ahtem Ciygoz, the Deputy Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People, was punished by the Russian occupants for his support of territorial integrity of Ukraine and his fight for human rights. It is yet another manifestation of Russia's repressive policy on the Crimean peninsula, aimed at suppressing dissent voices and opposition to the Kremlin regime, as well as yet another evidence of discrimination against Crimean Tatars.

We demand from the Russian Federation to release Ahtem Ciygoz, to stop repressions against Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians on the territory of the occupied Crimea and to restore the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

We call on the international community to consistently respond to the cynical human rights violations in Crimea and to strengthen the political and diplomatic pressure on the Kremlin in order to ensure the return of the aggressor state to the tenets of international law.

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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Colombia**I. Introduction**

1. The present report is the final report on the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Colombia, which concludes on 25 September 2017. In addition to covering major developments during the final 90-day reporting period, from 24 June to 25 September, it takes stock of the activities carried out throughout the course of the Mission's mandate. It also covers provisional work undertaken by the Mission to prepare the ground for the future Verification Mission, as requested by the Council in its resolution 2366 (2017).

II. Major developments

2. The reporting period was marked, above all, by the culmination of the ceasefire, the cessation of hostilities and the process for the laying down of arms that has unfolded since the signing of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, 10 months earlier, in November 2016, and the transformation of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army (FARC-EP) from a military organization into a new political party. The period also witnessed the start of the reintegration phase for former members of the FARC-EP.

3. The transformation of the FARC-EP into the People's Alternative Revolutionary Force signifies the transition of the FARC-EP into civilian life. More than 1,200 FARC-EP delegates took part in the founding congress, which was held in Bogota from 27 August to 1 September. The leader of FARC-EP, Rodrigo Londoño, also known as Timoleón Jiménez, was named head of the new party, and a national political council of 15 members was elected. The members expressed their readiness, in the context of the presidential elections to be held in 2018, to join a coalition government that would support the implementation of the Final Agreement.

4. Another step towards the reintegration of FARC-EP was taken on 15 August 2017 when the group submitted a final inventory of its property and assets, as required in the Final Agreement. On 24 August, the Government established a transitional interministerial commission to review the inventory and oversee its management. Members of the People's Alternative Revolutionary Force will be appointed to ensure the handover of the material listed in the inventory, which, under the Final Agreement, is to be used for reparations for victims of the armed conflict.



Major legislation approved under "fast track" procedures

5. By the end of the reporting period, three important peace implementation laws had been adopted by Congress, one of which is pending reconciliation, and seven draft laws were pending consideration. The laws were passed under the so-called "fast track" procedures that allow for expedited congressional approval and will expire at the end of 2017. On 9 August, Congress adopted legislation to establish a subdirector of the National Protection Unit to provide security to members of the former FARC-EP and its successor political party under a mixed protection scheme with the national police. On 15 August, Congress adopted reforms to the National Royalty System, which provide for the earmarking of seven per cent of all royalties from natural resource concessions collected by municipal governments to support the implementation of the Final Agreement over the next 20 years. Finally, on 28 August, the Chamber of Representatives adopted legislation on the monopoly of force, including a constitutional prohibition of illegal armed civilian groups of any type. The law will now be reconciled with a version previously adopted by the Senate.

6. Other draft laws pending in Congress have implications for the legislative and presidential elections of 2018, including a draft law on political reform and a draft law regulating the creation of 16 special transitory peace electoral districts for social and civic representatives in areas affected by the conflict.

7. The statutory law establishing a special jurisdiction for peace to address crimes committed during the armed conflict is currently under consideration. On 29 August, the Attorney General publicly expressed concern that, as a result of delays, the work of that jurisdiction, which is to play a part in the reintegration process, may not begin until April or May 2018.

8. Finally, four pieces of legislation related to various dimensions of rural development and land tenure are pending consideration by Congress. These include legislation on a multipurpose land registry for rural areas, access to land within forest reserves, the creation of a national system for agricultural and fishery innovation and the regulation of land development a public programme supporting land productivity and infrastructure.

9. On 10 July, the President issued the last of three decrees granting amnesty to a total of 6,005 FARC-EP members who had completed the laying down of arms and been accredited by the Colombian Office of the High Commissioner for Peace.

Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement

10. During the reporting period, the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement continued to work to address challenges to the implementation of the Final Agreement. Following the road map agreement of 29 May 2017, minor adjustments were required during the reporting period. The parties to the agreement decided, inter alia, to postpone by two weeks, that is until 15 August, the transformation of the zones and points where the laying down of arms would take place into territorial areas for training and reintegration, where former combatants would initiate their reintegration. On 29 August, the Government appointed two new representatives to the Commission, Interior Minister Guillermo Rivera and the newly appointed High Commissioner for Peace Rodrigo Rivera Salazar. The latter succeeded Sergio Jaramillo, who played a central role in the peace process since the beginning of the negotiations with FARC-EP.

11. The Special High-level Forum for Women was established on 29 July and, together with the Special High-level Forum for Ethnic Peoples established on 15 March, is to serve as an interlocutor and advisor to the Commission to bring the perspectives and contributions of women and ethnic peoples into the peace implementation process. Both bodies have strongly called for greater engagement with the Commission to fulfil their obligations under the Final Agreement.

Temporary bilateral ceasefire between the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army

12. On 4 September, the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army announced, within the framework of the peace talks held in Quito, that they had agreed to a bilateral and temporary ceasefire to take effect from 1 October 2017 to 12 January 2018, as well as several humanitarian measures. The announcement was made just before the visit to Colombia from 6 to 10 September of Pope Francis, who called for reconciliation among all Colombians. The parties also announced the establishment of a monitoring and verification mechanism that would involve the Government, the National Liberation Army, the United Nations and the Catholic Church. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Colombia has been in consultations with both parties on the modalities of the potential support of the United Nations for this process, on the basis of which the Secretary-General will make recommendations as soon as possible for consideration by the Council.

III. Mission tasks

A. Activities relating to the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities and coordination of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism

13. Throughout the Mission's mandate, the tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, comprised of observers from the United Nations, the Government of Colombia and FARC-EP, proved to be an invaluable confidence-building tool at all levels. The Mission, as its coordinator, focused its monitoring responsibilities on the zones and points mentioned above, the security zones and the surrounding areas where the armed forces are deployed.

14. Since the beginning of its activities, the Mechanism has received 491 requests for the verification of incidents, and 473 incidents have been verified. Of those, 331 were deemed outside the mandate of the Mechanism, while the remaining 142 incidents comprised 78 cases of non-compliance with ceasefire and cessation of hostilities protocols due to misinterpretations or a lack of coordination, 54 minor violations and 10 serious violations. Most violations were related to movements of FARC-EP members, incursions by the public security forces into the security zones of the zones or points, and irregularities in the security controls on access to the zones and points. No serious violations were recorded during the reporting period.

B. Laying down of arms

Laying down of individual arms

15. During the reporting period, the Mission completed the individual certification of FARC-EP members who had laid down arms at the zones and points. This individual certification was a key component of the process that enabled FARC-EP members to complete their transition towards legality and fully participate in the reintegration phase. The storing in the Mission's containers of arms brought into the camps by FARC-EP members was completed on 27 June 2017.

16. All unstable material in the zones and points was destroyed and all collected ammunition was incinerated between 1 and 28 July. Technical guidance and instruction videos were disseminated to observers at local team sites to ensure that those actions were carried out safely and effectively.

17. Between 31 July and 15 August, containers were removed from all 26 camps through a series of land and air-land operations and transported to a central warehouse outside of Bogotá. The transportation of the containers was carried out by convoys escorted by the national police and the armed forces.

18. On 15 August, the removal of containers at the camp of Pondores (La Guajira Department) marked the conclusion of the process and was celebrated in a ceremony attended by President Juan Manuel Santos and the FARC-EP leadership. This event initiated the transformation of each of the zones and points into territorial areas for training and reintegration. Subsequently, former combatants were granted freedom of movement into and out of their camps.

19. On 16 August, the Mission began to disable all armaments at the central warehouse.

Verification of the disposal of arms caches

20. During the reporting period, the pace of operations to verify the disposal of arms caches accelerated as the deadline of 1 September neared. Those operations were conducted by the Mission with FARC-EP, and logistical and security assistance from the armed forces and the police. On 31 August, at the request of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement, the deadline was extended for an additional two weeks, that is until 15 September. Since that date, the Colombian armed forces have been in charge of disposing of remaining caches, with the support of former FARC-EP members.

21. Two security incidents occurred during arms cache verification operations. On 6 August, in the area of El Pedregal, Cauca Department, an attack allegedly committed by FARC-EP dissidents resulted in the wounding of one member of the police escort. On 14 August, a member of the armed forces was killed when he stepped on a landmine while his unit was securing the perimeter for an arms cache verification operation in the municipality of Novita, Chocó Department.

22. Over the course of the Mission's mandate, FARC-EP provided information on more than 1,000 arms caches. By the completion of operations, on 15 September, the Mission had undertaken a total of 182 operations in coordination with FARC-EP to remove arms and destroy explosives from 750 arms caches.

23. On 22 September, the Mission informed the Government of Colombia about the completion of its activities relating to the laying down of arms by FARC-EP, including the disposal of arms collected in the zones and points, the material extracted from arms caches and all unstable material. In the course of the process for the laying down of arms, the Mission collected a total of 8,994 arms, 1,765,862 ammunition rounds, 38,255 kg of explosives, 11,015 grenades, 3,528 antipersonnel mines, 46,288 electric detonation caps, 4,370 mortar rounds and 51,911 metres of detonating cord and fuses.

C. Monitoring of the provision of goods and services to Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army camps

24. Both parties requested that the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism assess progress in establishing FARC-EP camps and in providing logistical support and health care. The Mechanism also supported and facilitated the implementation of some reintegration activities led by private and public entities in the zones and points, including training initiatives under the National Vocational Training Service, the issuance of identity documents by the National Registry and other activities carried out by universities and non-governmental organizations.

25. The Mechanism continued to monitor the delivery of supplies to FARC-EP camps, including food, clothing, hygiene items and cleaning products. Improvements were seen during the reporting period, especially with regard to the supply of food. The ties with local communities continue to be strengthened in keeping with agreements regarding the purchase of food from local producers. In some cases, as a result of the successful implementation of some productive and agricultural projects by FARC-EP members in the camps, food was purchased from FARC-EP producers. The provision of food and other products by the Government has been extended until 15 October, and the provision of health care until 30 November. The provision of health care at camp level continues to suffer from the fact that it cannot handle the more serious and chronic conditions.

D. Gender mainstreaming and engagement with women's groups

26. Throughout its mandate, the Mission had strong and consistent engagement with women's groups at the national, regional and local levels, and it worked closely with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on gender issues. The Mission also worked with the Mechanism to ensure a gender-sensitive approach in the activities of the Mechanism. Under the Mechanism gender directive, tripartite gender teams were established in regional offices and local team sites. These teams work with the civilian population on gender issues and facilitate their engagement with the Mechanism.

27. During the reporting period, ongoing dialogue with women representatives from FARC-EP, the Women's Special High-level Forum that supports the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement and other women's networks provided important inputs for the planning of the Verification Mission and recommendations on how best to integrate a gender approach in verification tasks.

E. Activities related to the liaison and coordination functions

28. Throughout its mandate, the Mission consistently engaged with a broad array of counterparts, including national, regional and local authorities and the international community, as well as civil society organizations, women's networks, ethnic group representatives, religious leaders and academia members.

29. During the reporting period, the Mission focused its liaison and engagement activities on organizing briefings and exchanges on the completion of its mandate, the evolution of the peace process and the mandate of the new Verification Mission, as well as on the different perspectives on reintegration and security guarantees. Civil society organizations have highlighted their concerns about threats against community and social leaders, human rights defenders and FARC-EP members.

Private sector representatives have conveyed their interest in collaborating with the Government in support of the reintegration of former combatants. The Special High-level Forum on Ethnic Peoples stressed the importance of bringing a community-sensitive perspective to efforts to advance peace, security, reintegration and reconciliation.

Coordination with the United Nations country team

30. While the Mission was not integrated with the United Nations country team, there was a very good level of coordination throughout the course of the Mission's mandate. During the start-up phase, the Mission relied heavily on the existing capacity of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to undertake procurement activities on behalf of the Mission, under cooperation arrangements consistent with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. UNDP provided temporary office accommodations for several months pending the identification of Mission headquarters in Bogota. The Mission also drew on existing capacity of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Bogota to facilitate the provision of travel services. When the Mission began expanding to the regional and local levels, the country team counterparts provided invaluable support in terms of logistics, expertise and engagement with local actors. As the United Nations Mission in Colombia transitions into the Verification Mission, regular coordination with the country team is taking place at the national, regional and local levels, including through participation in the local coordination teams established by the country team.

31. During the reporting period, the Mission also co-led with the Office of the Resident Coordinator an integrated planning process that led to the recommendations on the new Verification Mission (see S/2017/745). As a result of this planning process, a core group was established to ensure a coordinated approach in areas of mutual interest (i.e., information management, local coordination and risk analysis) as well as two joint Mission-country team working groups focused on both aspects of the new Verification Mission's mandate, namely, reintegration and security guarantees. The Mission and the country team are currently undertaking efforts to co-locate regional and subregional offices of the Verification Mission, where feasible, with a view to increasing efficiency.

32. On 27 June, following a formal request from President Juan Manuel Santos, the Secretary-General declared Colombia eligible to access financing from the Peacebuilding Fund, which will offer funding opportunities over the next 18 months for comprehensive stabilization interventions in the territories affected by the conflict, support for victims of forced displacement and the political and socioeconomic integration of former combatants.

IV. Provisional verification activities carried out pursuant to resolution 2366 (2017)

33. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2366 (2017), the Mission began on 10 July the verification of commitments relating to the reintegration of former FARC-EP members and security guarantees for the group and for conflict-affected communities that will be the focus of the work of the Verification Mission that will start on 26 September. These activities have been developed by the Mission's current 9 regional and 26 local headquarters.

A. Security guarantees

34. Prior to the start of initial verification activities on 10 July, the following national structures were put in place as part of the commitment to establishing an integrated security system: the creation on 9 December 2016 of the Technical Committee on Security and Protection, with the participation of members of the Government and the FARC-EP; the adoption on 23 February of legislation setting up a national protection unit to provide security to FARC-EP members; and the creation of the Subdirectorate of the National Protection Unit and the Security and Protection Corps. At the time of reporting, 210 former FARC-EP members had completed the mandatory training to become part of the National Protection Unit that will be formed of up to 1,200 FARC-EP personnel, along with members of the national police.

35. A key focus of efforts in the period since 10 July has been the strengthening of the deployment of Colombian police and armed forces around the 26 territorial areas for training and reintegration, where most of the former combatants live, and to nearby communities. This reconfiguration of the State's security presence was initiated on 15 August as the final arms were removed from the 26 zones and points.

36. With regard to the police, the basic unit of the rural mounted police has established posts in all 26 territorial areas, with an average of 33 police officers at each of those locations. All posts have at least one female officer responsible for gender-related issues and gender-based violence. The unit is also consulting with former combatants and communities about the establishment of immediate attention police centres near each of the territorial areas. In addition, the police has begun implementing the "Communities Safe and at Peace" programme, aimed at strengthening trust and dialogue with communities, local organizations and former combatants.

37. With regard to military presence, the battalions of terrestrial operations are positioned in the proximity of all 26 territorial areas. An average of 350 soldiers are positioned at each location, in keeping with parameters announced under Plan Victoria, the main territorial stabilization operation of the Ministry of Defence. Given the forthcoming termination of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, the armed forces have designed an inter-institutional concept, known as "Blue Tents" which seeks to bring public security entities under the same roof at the local level and improve coordination with communities, civil authorities and former combatants, mainly on security issues. The Mission verified that these coordination mechanisms had begun activities in several territorial areas in the Antioquia, Cesar, Guaviare and Meta Departments. The establishment of Blue Tents in the remaining areas is pending.

38. The response to these deployments from both communities and former combatants has been positive, as have efforts to establish regular channels for dialogue. At the same time, the communities have made it clear that their understanding of security includes not just protection but also basic social services, which they see as a necessary complement to the actions of security forces.

39. With regard to other security-related commitments under the Final Agreement, during the reporting period, the Subcommission of the National Commission on Security Guarantees undertook activities focused on the following areas: finalizing the Commission's workplan and its internal regulations; analysing the pattern of attacks against human rights defenders and social leaders; and better defining its approach to criminal groups, especially those successors of paramilitary groups. It should be noted that the Subcommission has engaged with civil society during this process.

40. On 25 July, the committee responsible for the selection of the Director of the Special Investigation Unit under the Office of the Attorney General called for applications for that position. It is expected that the committee will present on 14 November three candidates for the Attorney General's consideration. The Special Investigation Unit is to play a major role in efforts to dismantle organizations responsible for attacks on human rights defenders, social movements, political movements and those taking part in the implementation of the peace process.

41. In June, an elite police corps was created to serve, together with the Special Investigation Unit, as first responders to criminal incidents covered under the Final Agreement. The elite corps, which is reported to have currently 1,088 members, has thus far focused on combating the Gulf Cartel criminal organization and on supporting the investigations of cases of attacks on human rights defenders and social leaders.

42. The National Commission on Security Guarantees continues to monitor and examine allegations of attacks on human rights defenders and social leaders. The persistence of these cases requires prompt and effective action by State institutions to identify and punish those responsible, as well as a comprehensive and careful analysis to determine the underlying causes of violence and its impact on communities and their political participation.

43. Similarly, during the reporting period, the Mission received reports from the Office of the Attorney General, the police and human rights organizations about eight cases of homicide of former FARC-EP members and their relatives (seven former members and one relative). Going back further, since the former FARC-EP entered the zones in January 2017, the Mission has received reports from the aforementioned entities of 25 cases of homicide against former FARC-EP combatants (13) and their relatives (12). Among the former, five had recently received amnesty, five had been living within the zones and three had been living outside the zones. The majority (eight) of the former members belonged to militia structures of the FARC-EP. At the time of reporting, all cases were under investigation and three had resulted in the capture of suspects, who were pending prosecution. In one case, the perpetrator was convicted through the special indigenous jurisdiction. Most perpetrators, however, had not been arrested and the motivations for most of those crimes remained to be established.

44. Threats to the security of communities, organizations and former combatants appear to come primarily from persisting armed groups, including FARC-EP dissidents, and the effects of illegal economic activities. Even though no direct threat posed by these groups to former combatants has been identified in most territorial areas for training and reintegration, security entities are concerned about the risks that they may present once the political and socioeconomic reintegration process is more advanced, especially if political and social activities are perceived by those groups as a threat. In this context, an exercise involving assessments of collective risks for former combatants, the identification of individual high-risk cases and recommendations for protection arrangements has been carried out in 20 of the 26 territorial areas.

B. Resolution of legal situation

45. A prerequisite for the reintegration of FARC-EP members is the resolution of their legal situation. As set forth in the road map of 29 May 2017, the parties agreed in the framework of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement that the Government should take all measures necessary to ensure that, by the completion of the process for the laying

down of arms, all members of the FARC-EP in prison would be either freed or granted conditional release, a responsibility that lies with the judicial branch, and all members of FARC-EP in the zones and points would be granted amnesty and arrest warrants against them would be lifted. This has proved to be more challenging than initially envisaged.

46. Following meetings with political and judicial actors to discuss possible avenues to facilitate rapid compliance with those commitments, the Mission issued a public statement on 13 July in which it expressed concern over the continuing imprisonment of FARC-EP members despite the adoption of an amnesty law (Law No. 1820 of 2016) and related decrees. Working with both parties, the Mission further initiated an active verification of compliance with commitments.

47. Among the measures taken by the Government, the following should be highlighted: Decree 1252 of 2017 to facilitate and accelerate judicial decisions in application of the amnesty law; Decree 285 of 2017 designating 709 FARC-EP members as "peace advocates" able to undertake peace-related tasks outside prison despite ongoing judicial proceedings against them under the amnesty law; and Decree 1274 of 2017, which grants conditional release to FARC-EP members who had been charged or sentenced with serious crimes but had not served more than 5 years of prison time and had been transferred to alternative detention facilities during the previous phase, and which also lifts all arrest warrants against FARC-EP members, including those issued for extradition purposes. The Government reported, that as at 8 September 2017, a total number of 2,590 FARC-EP members had been released from prison, of an estimated total of 3,000 to 3,400.

48. Constructive discussions continue to take place between the Government and FARC-EP with a view to ensuring full implementation of all measures. Critical issues that should be addressed include, among others, the prevention of arrest and detention of FARC-EP members, the conclusion of pending judicial proceedings (in particular those relating to the amnesty law), the release of all designated peace advocates and of those under consideration for this designation, as well as the resolution of extradition requests and individual cases of special resident peace visas for foreign members of FARC-EP.

C. Reintegration

49. At the present time, the reintegration of the members of FARC-EP is undoubtedly the most critical task within the overall peace consolidation agenda. The grave problems caused by armed dissidence in several parts of the country or the attempts by armed groups and illegal actors to lure former combatants with the prospect of high benefits serve as a reminder of what could be the implications of failure. Time is of the essence as, 10 months after the signing of the Final Agreement, and while the laying down of arms is celebrated as a great achievement, the mindset of many former FARC-EP members in the territorial areas for training and reintegration remains one of uncertainty, or even anxiety, as to what the future holds. Over the past several months, preparation has taken place in several areas, and a number of actions have been undertaken. Today, as government support for the territorial areas with regard to food, health and other services is scheduled to come to an end, uncertainty must give way to confidence and anxiety to a positive outlook, in particular with regard to the productive future of those FARC members with a farmer's background who aim at reintegration in the rural areas. Furthermore, the reintegration of former FARC-EP members is bound to have an impact on another dimension of the restoration of peace in Colombia: the peace process between the Government and the National Liberation Army.

Political reintegration

50. The law of May 2017 that contains the provisions for political reintegration is still under review by the Constitutional Court. As mentioned above, the founding congress of FARC as a political party defined the main elements of its political platform and met the organizational requisites for its registration as a political party by the National Electoral Council. Twenty-three per cent of the 111 elected members of the party's directorate are women.

51. In June, the policy and research institute Centre for Political Thought and Dialogue was established with support from the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund. The Centre provides technical support to the new FARC political party in the context of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement and the National Reintegration Council, as well as technical support to the six provisional FARC spokespersons in Congress (who do not have the right to vote).

Socioeconomic reintegration

52. The National Reintegration Council has met regularly but is yet to fulfil its central responsibility: the definition of an overall strategy for the reintegration process. The absence of a strategy and implementation plan for socioeconomic reintegration is a serious challenge. The restructured Agency for Reintegration and Normalization, which has carried out an early reintegration plan, will have an important role in the implementation of socioeconomic reintegration. As such, it requires resources and capacities in line with its tasks. The Agency's Technical Unit in charge of the reintegration of FARC members, with the direct participation of former combatants, is still to be created and its director to be appointed.

53. The provision of basic living conditions to the former combatants in the territorial areas for training and reintegration is a major aspect of their reintegration. Reintegration efforts with a community-based focus were to begin upon the conversion of the zones and points to those territorial areas on 15 August. The management of the areas remains the responsibility of the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace until 1 October and will then shift to the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization. Owing to logistical delays over the past eight months, only seven of the 26 FARC-EP camps have been fully built. Therefore, one of the main operational challenges is completing the camps, in addition to ensuring continuity of services, especially health services, into the reintegration phase. Health care is a particularly sensitive issue given the fact that, as has been observed in guerrilla groups undergoing reintegration, a high number of former combatants suffer from chronic conditions. There are 17 particularly serious cases that require specialized attention. The Agency, together with FARC, is trying to attend those cases but faces logistical challenges. In addition, the programme that focuses on high-cost health care and the treatment of injuries suffered by FARC-EP members during the conflict, which is provided under Decree 899 of 2017, has not yet been implemented.

54. During the reporting period, the Agency focused its efforts on the implementation of early reintegration plans that include access to health, psychosocial and pension services, education and vocational training, cultural and sports activities and fostering community engagement.

55. With regard to financial support, during the reporting period, the Government began the process of opening bank accounts for former FARC-EP members in the Agrarian Bank of Colombia. Bank accounts are a prerequisite for the Government to be able to transfer payments (basic income, a one-off normalization allowance and

economic support for productive projects) to which former combatants are eligible over a period of 24 months. The Agency reported that 9,491 of the 11,445 persons accredited by the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace had opened bank accounts. The Mission received reports of difficulties in completing required documentation and accreditation. On 30 August, payments began to eligible members for their basic income and one-off normalization allowance.

56. One of the important challenges faced by the National Reintegration Council will be to work with former FARC-EP members and conflict-affected communities to define a viable model of economic reintegration. The reporting period has been marked by the start of a limited number of actions at the national and local levels. On 6 July, the results of a socioeconomic census of FARC-EP members were submitted to the National Reintegration Council by the National University. They drew upon a survey of 10,015 former FARC-EP members, of whom 2,267 were women. Some of the preliminary findings are that 66 per cent of former combatants came from rural areas; 77 per cent reported having no housing; 60 per cent expressed interest in collective agricultural activities, while 39 per cent indicated a preference for working in construction and housing; and 7.5 per cent of women of reproductive age were pregnant. A significant percentage of the respondents indicated that they were of ethnic origin (18 per cent considered themselves indigenous and 12 per cent Afrodescendent) pointing to the need for effective coordination with ethnic authorities and mechanisms.

57. On 4 July, Ecomun, a joint social and economic cooperative organization for former FARC-EP members, was launched, although it has had limited activity to date owing to delays in defining a strategy for the economic reintegration of its members. One of the main achievements of Ecomun has been the successful training of 4,947 former FARC-EP members in "solidarity economy" (cooperative models) at the territorial areas for training and reintegration. The road map of 29 May 2017 provided for the establishment of a working group for the formulation, within 60 days, of viable productive projects to be implemented by Ecomun or other organizations. The working group was established but has not presented its conclusions to the National Reintegration Council. For its part, the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization has visited 12 territorial areas for training and reintegration and designed seven projects. In addition, UNDP is working with the National Reintegration Council to support the deployment of experts to facilitate the formulation of sustainable productive projects. So far, only a few productive projects have been presented to the National Reintegration Council, mostly supported by the international community, namely, a capacity-building project funded by Caritas Norway and the Acuacop cooperative, and environmental protection programmes for members of the former FARC-EP and the conflict-affected communities in Miravalle (Antioquia Department) and Mesetas and Macarena (Meta Department), supported by the Ministry of Environment, the Norwegian Refugee Council, UNDP and the Colombian Foundation of Former Combatants and Peace Promoters (FUCEPAZ).

58. A mine action project implemented by a humanitarian demining organization composed of former FARC members (Humanicemos), supported by the Government's agency on mine action (the Department for Comprehensive Action against Antipersonnel Mines) and the Mine Action Service of the United Nations, and with funding from the European Union, is aimed at employing 1,000 former FARC-EP members.

59. The Mission can also report examples of economic initiatives launched by former FARC-EP members themselves. In Colinas (Guaviare Department), former FARC-EP members have started a project with food crops as well as livestock. Apart from the construction of greenhouses, which was funded by a non-governmental

organization, the remainder of the initiative has been self-funded. In Agua Bonita (Caquetá Department), five projects have been identified: fish farming, bakery, carpentry shop, shoe shop and an agricultural initiative. In La Reforma (Meta Department), projects are under way to grow sachu inchi seeds, with a view to exporting the oil produced therefrom.

60. One of the key challenges for the sustainability of economic reintegration is access to land, which has not been clearly established in the Final Agreement. An appropriate and swift mechanism for land titling should be urgently established to ensure the viability of productive projects for former FARC-EP members and communities. It is also important to follow up on the commitment in the road map agreement that refers to a land inventory (which may include property listed in the inventory of FARC-EP assets) that will be available to former FARC-EP members and communities for productive projects.

61. While female former combatants have participated in the available reintegration programmes, the implementation of those projects does not clearly address the specific situation of women yet. Local initiatives by women's organizations have sought to include female former combatants, as in Pandores (Guajira Department), where the Association of Women Coffee Growers from Perijá has opened opportunities for female former combatants to get involved in the Association and its projects.

62. Thirty-four minors were removed from FARC-EP camps on 15 and 16 August with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross. From September 2016 to August 2017, 122 minors formerly associated with the FARC-EP (66 girls and 56 boys) began the reintegration process, which implied their registration as victims, their inclusion in the special programme for reintegration known as "A Different Path of Life" led by the Office of the Presidential Council for Human Rights and their being granted access to the administrative programme of rights restitution. The effective implementation of the programme is still incipient and specific details about its scope, timeline, costs, funding and modalities for transition to the adult programme have not been publicly shared. Efforts are being made by the Office of the Presidential Council for Human Rights to address the issue of minors who exited the camps during early phases of the process for the laying down of arms. The Government arranged for continued care for 118 minors, including through temporary care institutions (22), family reunification (44), foster families (5) and temporary care centres (19 minors remain in the centres managed by the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Children's Fund). In addition, 10 minors opted to return to the territorial areas for training and reintegration and another 18 who have reached 18 years of age are transitioning to the adult programme. Efforts to support minors living in the territorial areas are ongoing. Nevertheless, comprehensive access to protection, health care, education and recreational activities remains a challenge. The reintegration programmes for families with young children are also pending.

63. A health profiling exercise was conducted in the zones and points by the Ministry of Health. Health services in those areas were initially provided through mobile basic health posts and mobile teams and limited to basic health services. Logistical difficulties and a lack of supplies were some of the challenges faced in the implementation of health programmes.

64. Some 9,755 persons have been affiliated with the social security system, which is a partial but significant step in improving access to health care. The Mission reports that a more modest estimate of 3,840 former combatants have been affiliated with the national pension fund, owing to limited information in the local areas regarding the affiliation process and its benefits.

V. Mission structures

A. International observers

65. As at 10 September, the Mission had 428 observers deployed from 19 countries, of an authorized ceiling of 450, 49 of whom (11 per cent) were women.

66. With a view to ensuring a seamless transition to the Verification Mission, the Mission has requested that a number of observers just below the ceiling of 120 authorized in resolution 2377 (2017) remain on the ground until the end of the tour of duty to serve with the Verification Mission. Remaining observers will be repatriated in a staggered manner starting on 25 September. Observers to be repatriated will remain operational until the end of the Mission's mandate, on 25 September, after which, pending their checkout, they will focus on administrative handover tasks.

67. On 18 August, a Chilean observer died of a sudden health condition. The Mission paid tribute to his dedication and service.

B. Coordination and substantive personnel

68. The Mission has recruited a total of 96 international civilian staff, that is, 86 per cent of the authorized strength, 78 national staff out of an authorized strength of 100 and 53 United Nations Volunteers, equivalent to 93 per cent of the authorized strength. In August 2017, women comprised 48 per cent of the civilian staff of the Mission.

C. Mission support

69. With regard to the operations of the tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, the Government of Colombia and the United Nations agreed on a cost-sharing arrangement whereby the cost of support would be allocated between the United Nations and the Government in accordance with applicable Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2307 (2016).

70. The Mission and the Government of Colombia are in the final stages of negotiation of the pending letters of assist for the provision of premises, transport services and communications and of the memorandum of understanding governing cost-sharing arrangements in order to complete pending transactions from the Mission in Colombia.

71. During the reporting period, Mission Support focused on three dimensions of the process for the laying down of arms: the provision of air support and land transportation for operations to dispose of arms caches; the provision of aviation and movement control support to transport arms and ammunition to Bogotá safely, and the provision of logistical and technical support for disabling arms collected through the process for the laying down of arms.

72. A second focus during the period has been to ensure the continuity of operations as the Mission transitions from its current status, with its considerable reliance on government-provided services, to that of the Verification Mission, which will depend fully on United Nations support arrangements. Mission Support is working to establish Mission contracts through direct negotiations with existing vendors to ensure continuity in ground transport support and is developing options for office and staff accommodations to ensure continuity of operations at the 26 local sites after 25 September, when governmental support is expected to end. At

some of the local sites that are distant from population centres, the Mission is working to identify solutions for challenging conditions, including potable water, the availability of goods and services and access to health facilities.

D. Conduct and discipline

73. During the reporting period, the Mission continued to focus its conduct and discipline efforts on prevention measures, such as enhanced induction training sessions, the conduction of refresher training sessions and monitoring visits by the Conduct and Discipline Team to regional offices and local sites. The Mission initiated the mapping of government actors involved in victim assistance, including their local presence in the regions where Mission personnel are deployed.

74. Two allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were reported over the course of the Mission's mandate. One was found to be unsubstantiated, while the other is currently under review at Headquarters. Both cases were also reported to the Office of the Attorney General. After its own investigations, the Office recently closed both cases and declined to press charges.

E. Safety and security

75. On 5 July, the employee of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime who had been held hostage for more than two months by members of a dissident FARC-EP front in Guaviare Department was released unharmed. However, given continuing security concerns, the previously adopted restrictions on non-essential, unescorted movements of United Nations personnel continued to apply in areas of Cauca, Guaviare, Meta and Caquetá Departments. The security risk assessment developed for the Mission predicts that residual risk levels in relation to most identified threats (kidnapping, attack by spoilers, crossfire and violent demonstrations) vary between low and medium. From a security management perspective, the activities planned for the Mission were considered viable insofar as the relevant risk management measures were fully implemented. Landmines continued to pose considerable risk in some areas.

76. Throughout its mandate, the Mission had a unified security structure with safety and security coordination and advice being provided jointly by the Department of Safety and Security to the Mission and the country team. This approach evolved over the course of the mandate as the concept was refined both at Headquarters and on the ground. Given that the unified security structure has proved useful, it is advisable that it be continued for the forthcoming Mission and that its potential for maximizing efficiency in similar situations be analysed.

VI. Observations

77. The United Nations Mission in Colombia will conclude its mandate on 25 September, having accomplished the two tasks entrusted to it by the Security Council. Its role in coordinating the tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism for the cease-fire and the cessation of hostilities and its specific role with respect to overseeing the laying down of arms have undoubtedly contributed to the successful implementation of the corresponding provisions of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, through which more than five decades of conflict between the FARC-EP and the State of Colombia have been brought to a close. The strong united support of the Security Council and the international community, the dedication and hard work of

the Mission's personnel and, above all, the firm political will of both parties have made these initial accomplishments possible. My observations will focus on the lessons learned from the Mission, which may be useful for the United Nations and in the future.

78. I would like to draw attention to the commitment to and trust in the process shown by the Security Council from the outset, as it responded to the wish of the Government of Colombia and the FARC-EP for a United Nations peace operation to provide support to their peace process. The Organization has been able in this case to offer a response that was quick, flexible and tailored to the particularities of the Colombian situation. The Council had the foresight to invest in the peace process at an early stage, lending its vote of confidence when a final settlement was still not assured, thus greatly facilitating timely preparations that were an important element for the successful implementation of the mandate. It is worth recalling that, on 25 January 2016, when it adopted resolution 2261 (2016) establishing the Mission and authorizing the Secretary-General to begin preparations on the ground, the two parties were still several months away from concluding their final ceasefire and eight months from the signing of a final peace agreement. The use of a two-stage mandating process involving preparations followed by a more detailed mandate when all information was available, which has also been adopted for the Verification Mission, proved to be an efficient practice. I commend the Council for this approach, as well as for providing the Mission with a clear, time-bound and achievable mandate.

79. The full operational insertion of a United Nations peace operation within a tripartite mechanism including the two parties to a peace agreement is undoubtedly one of the innovative elements of our engagement with Colombia. The opportunities and challenges that it entailed should be analysed for its potential applicability in other peace processes. During the negotiations of the ceasefire agreement, the parties invested significant efforts in building confidence between one another. The same approach was used in the implementation phase, which contributed largely to the success of the operation. The strong adherence to the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities agreement is at least in part due to the effective functioning of the Mechanism. On balance, the Mission benefited greatly from its partnership with the two parties, which facilitated to a large extent the management of a complex mandate in difficult and remote terrain, without impinging on the Mission's independence, which was critical to the credibility of the verification process.

80. Support arrangements were unprecedented in United Nations peace operations in that the functioning of the tripartite Mechanism, as well as significant aspects of the establishment and maintenance of the field deployment, were subject to cost-sharing arrangements with the Government of Colombia, as approved by the Security Council in its resolution 2307 (2016). This required the introduction of innovative approaches in delivering necessary services to the Mission and the Mechanism with the Government acting as primary provider of goods and services for the latter. The establishment of the respective framework agreements with the Government of Colombia required in-depth discussions that extended until the final days of the Mission. At the same time, the Mission's start-up benefited from the authorization of standing administrative measures governing human resources management and the procurement of goods and services.

81. Although the Mission was primarily composed of observers from military and police backgrounds performing tasks related to ceasefire monitoring, the laying down of arms and the coordination of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, its civilian component performed critical liaison, outreach and public information tasks that enabled the Mission to engage closely with government counterparts, local communities and civil society. Outreach by the Mission to all sectors of

Colombian society contributed to fostering consensus in support of the Mission's presence and the relevance of the implementation of the ceasefire and the laying down of arms, despite continued debate within society with respect to other elements of the Final Agreement. It was important, over the course of the Mission's mandate, to ensure adequate coordination and communication between its civilian and observer components, including through information-sharing, common situational analysis and joint outreach to stakeholders.

82. As previously noted, the United Nations country team provided invaluable operating capabilities for the establishment of the Mission and continued to support its work throughout the Mission's mandate. I am confident that the very good relations between the Mission and the country team, which itself has important responsibilities with regard to supporting the implementation of the peace agreements, will strengthen further under the forthcoming Verification Mission. This experience can provide a useful example for how peace operations can work together with a country team even though they are not structurally integrated.

83. I would like to express my gratitude to the observer-contributing countries, in particular those from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. The strong support of the region for the peace process, as well as the broad range of countries contributing with observers, enhanced the credibility and effectiveness of the Mission. I would also like to acknowledge the two guarantors of the peace process, Cuba and Norway, and the two accompanying countries, Chile and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

84. I would like to express once again my recognition and gratitude to all past and present observers and civilian personnel of the United Nations Mission in Colombia, as well as to my Special Representative for Colombia, Jean Arnault, for their dedication to the cause of peace in Colombia. The requests from the parties for additional United Nations verification, especially through the forthcoming Verification Mission, are a sign of the confidence generated by the Mission through the seriousness and impartiality of its work.

85. The peace process in Colombia continues to be a source of good news and hope for the country and for the world. The achievements of the parties could set an example for other peace processes elsewhere in the world, and deserve the utmost credit and recognition. The consolidation of peace, however, will require sustained commitment by all parties. The mandate of the Verification Mission and the responsibilities entrusted to the United Nations system in Colombia in the Final Peace Agreement provide an opportunity to stay the course in supporting this Colombian-led peace process.



Security Council

Distr.: General
26 September 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 25 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a non-official translation of the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan on 23 September 2017 on the recent events at Kalma camp in South Darfur State (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Omer Dahab Fadl **Mohamed**
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 25 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Media and Public Relations Department**

Press Release

The Sudanese Foreign Ministry strongly condemns the events that took place at Kalma Camp in West Darfur's Bilail County on Friday 22nd September 2017 and led to clashes initiated by members of armed groups that resulted in death and injury to some camp dweller citizens. The events coincided with the President's unprecedented visit to Bilail County, which was organised in the context of the President's care and commitment to see for himself and address the challenges facing citizens who were displaced. The visit was greatly welcomed by the camp-dwellers who were ready to participate in the public meeting that was organised by South Darfur Government; but isolated elements from Abdelwahid Nour's movement tried aggressively to stop people from proceeding to the site of the public meeting with the President. This behaviour resulted in clashes led by elements of the rebel movement who crossed outside the camp to target police and security forces which were there as a routine security deployment ahead of the public meeting. It is worth mentioning that South Darfur security authorities had informed UNAMID in writing one day before the events about the intentions and plans of some members of Abdelwahid's movement to disrupt and sabotage the President's visit.

However, the vast majority of camp dwellers attended the public meeting which was addressed by one of their representatives as planned.

The Sudanese Foreign Ministry reiterates its strong condemnation of the criminal disruption through which some members of the armed groups tried to tarnish the president's historic visit to the county of Bilail and Kalma camp, prays for the souls of those innocent victims who lost their lives, and extends condolences to the bereaved families and wishes a speedy recovery to those who were injured.

Ambassador Gariballah ElKhedir
Foreign Ministry Spokesperson
Khartoum, 23 September 2017



Security Council

Distr.: General
26 September 2017

Original: English

Identical letters dated 26 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Upon instruction from my Government, I have the honour to attach herewith a list clarifying the number of civilians dead and injured because of terrorist attacks, including mortar shells and explosive devices, committed or launched by terrorist armed groups against safe neighbourhoods in different Syrian cities and areas during the period from 22 August to 21 September 2017.

<i>Governorate</i>	<i>Dead</i>	<i>Dead children among them</i>	<i>Injured</i>	<i>Injured children among them</i>
Damascus	2	0	23	1
Damascus suburb	1	0	5	0
Dar'a	1	0	5	3
Suwayda'	0	0	5	0
Homs	3	1	23	4
Hama	10	2	40	7
Tartus	0	0	0	0
Ladhiqiyah	0	0	0	0
Idlib	0	0	0	0
Aleppo	4	3	33	13
Dayr al-Zawr	12	2	48	5
Hasakah	1	1	33	9
Qunaytirah	0	0	1	0
Raqqah	0	0	0	0
Total	34	9	216	42

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Bashar Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



**Security Council**

Distr.: General
26 September 2017

Original: English

**Identical notes verbales dated 23 September 2017 from the
Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Sudan to the United Nations has the honour to transmit herewith the letter dated 23 September 2017, co-signed by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Sudan and South Sudan, respectively, concerning the situation in the Sudan territory of Abyei which is self-explanatory (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Sudan to the United Nations requests the circulation of the present note verbale and its annex as a document of the Security Council.



**Annex to the identical notes verbales dated 23 September 2017
from the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the
Security Council**

Following the actions and measures taken by the Republic of South Sudan and the Republic of the Sudan to enhance and support the mandate of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, we have the honour to jointly express to you our determination to continue and further our cooperation in implementing Security Council resolutions 1990 (2011) and 2352 (2017).

Thus far, we have made considerable strides in addressing the challenges regarding clearances and access for reconnaissance missions of the Mechanism on our respective sides of the border. Moreover, we have held meetings in Juba, Khartoum, Addis Ababa and New York, and we would like to reconfirm to you our resolve to remove the obstacles and address the challenges facing the operationalization of the Mechanism.

We would like to affirm to you our readiness to uphold the commitments we made in the Agreement on the Border Monitoring Support Mission (2011) and the Agreement on Security Arrangements (2012), and to hold the meetings of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism and the Joint Security Committee, and begin a political process to unlock the deadlock on Abyei and the borders, as urged in Security Council resolution 2352 (2017).

We are confident that you would agree with us that the role of Ethiopia, the sole troop contributor to the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, should be commended and reconfirmed.

You may, as well, agree with us that the need remains urgent, especially under the current political and security situation prevailing in the region; the Security Council and the Secretary-General are earnestly expected and requested to reiterate their acknowledged keenness and preparedness to continue securing Abyei. To this end, we are jointly seeking additional support from the United Nations for the delivery of social services and development activities to the Abyei Area, as a means of engendering peaceful coexistence and cooperation.

(Signed) Deng Alor **Kuol**
Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
of the Republic of South Sudan

(Signed) Ibrahim Ahmed A. **Ghandour**
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of the Sudan



Security Council

Distr.: General
4 October 2017
English
Original: Russian

Letter dated 26 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith information bulletins from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic for the period 22-26 September 2017 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) V. Nebenzia



Annex to the letter dated 26 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (22 September 2017)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported seven incidents of gunfire in the following governorates: three in Dar'a, two in Damascus and two in Ladhqiyyah.

The Turkish representative office has reported six violations in the following governorates: two in Damascus, two in Idlib, one in Aleppo and one in Dar'a.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusra Front and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out three humanitarian operations: the delivery of 1.6 tons of food to the local population of Na'im in Homs governorate; the delivery of 2.2 tons of food to the local population of Tall Abu Susa in Aleppo governorate; and the delivery of 1.4 tons of food to the local population of Dar'a in Dar'a governorate.

In total, 1,620 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,172.9 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 285 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 57,482 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, no ceasefire agreements have been signed.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is unchanged — it is still 2,235.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime have continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 233.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (23 September 2017)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported three incidents of gunfire: two in Hama governorate and one in Damascus governorate.

The Turkish representative office has reported seven violations: four in Idlib governorate and three in Damascus governorate.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusra Front and ISIL.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has not carried out any humanitarian operations.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, no ceasefire agreements have been signed.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is unchanged — it is still 2,235.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 233.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (24 September 2017)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported nine incidents of gunfire in the following governorates: four in Damascus, four in Hama and one in Aleppo.

The Turkish representative office has reported five violations in the following governorates: three in Idlib, one in Aleppo and one in Hama.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusrah Front and ISIL.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has not carried out any humanitarian operations.

The United Nations has carried out one humanitarian operation: food, medicine and household supplies with a total weight of 225 tons were delivered to Mudayra in Damascus governorate.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 60 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 57,542 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, no ceasefire agreements have been signed.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is unchanged — it is still 2,235.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime have continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

Over the past 24 hours, one application form has been signed with the leader of an illegal armed group operating in de-escalation area No. 1.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire has increased to 234.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (25 September 2017)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported 13 incidents of gunfire in the following governorates: 4 in Damascus, 4 in Hama, 3 in Homs, 1 in Dar'a and 1 in Ladhqiyyah.

The Turkish representative office has reported two violations in Damascus governorate.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusra Front and ISIL.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out two humanitarian operations: school supplies were delivered to the local population of Kafr Nasih and Ahras.

In total, 1,622 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,173.2 tons.

The United Nations has carried out one humanitarian operation: food, medicine and household supplies with a total weight of 225 tons were delivered to Mudayra in Damascus governorate.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 45 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 57,587 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, no ceasefire agreements have been signed.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is unchanged — it is still 2,235.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime have continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (26 September 2017)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported nine incidents of gunfire in the following governorates: five in Damascus, three in Homs and one in Ladhqiyyah.

The Turkish representative office has reported 18 violations in the following governorates: 11 in Damascus, 4 in Idlib, 2 in Dar'a and 1 in Homs.

Most of the incidents of small arms being fired indiscriminately have been reported in areas controlled by fighters of the terrorist groups Nusra Front and ISIL.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out three humanitarian operations: food with a total weight of 6 tons was delivered to the local population of Dary al-Fardis in Homs governorate; and food with a total weight of 3 tons was delivered to the local population of Tall Rifat and Dayr Jamal in Aleppo governorate.

In total, 1,625 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,182.2 tons.

The United Nations has dispatched two humanitarian convoys: food and medicine with a total weight of 115 tons were delivered to Tayyibah and Tall Shihab in Dar'a governorate.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 24 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 57,611 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, no ceasefire agreements have been signed.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is unchanged — it is still 2,235.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime have continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
27 September 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 26 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing to alert you of the heinous terror attack that took place in Israel today.

A 37-year-old Palestinian man, exploiting his work permit authorized by Israel, arrived at the entrance to the town of Har Adar alongside other Palestinian employees to begin the workday. At the entrance, upon being told by security to halt due to his suspicious behaviour, this terrorist drew a pistol from his shirt and opened fire on the Israeli security personnel on duty that morning.

Border Police Officer St. Sgt. Solomon Gabariya and civilian security guards Yussuf Utman of Abu Gosh and Or Arish of Har Adar were murdered. The town's security coordinator was critically injured as well. The swift response of the security forces, who lost their lives stopping the terrorist before he could enter the town, prevented an even more deadly outcome from occurring.

This murderous attack is the direct result of the Palestinian Authority's payments to terrorists and its systematic incitement. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah faction has already celebrated this terrorist and his killings by posting his picture on its official website and praising him as a martyr. Hamas, the internationally designated terror organization, has also glorified this attack and continues to encourage terrorism against Israel.

I call on the Security Council to condemn this terror attack. Further, I call on the Council to denounce the Palestinian Authority for relentlessly glorifying and incentivizing terror, particularly through monthly terrorist stipends. Finally, I call on the Council to ensure that the Palestinian Authority and President Abbas unequivocally condemn the attack.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Danny Danon
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



**General Assembly
Security Council**

Distr.: General
28 September 2017

Original: English

**General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and
the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

**Security Council
Seventy-second year**

**Identical letters dated 26 September 2017 from the Permanent
Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly
and the President of the Security Council**

I write to you once again with regard to Israel's incessant and provocative declarations regarding plans to construct and expand Israeli settlements throughout the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, in direct and grave contravention of international law and Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), and in blatant defiance of the international community.

On 25 September 2017, various Israeli media reported that the so-called Israeli Civil Administration is preparing to advance plans within the coming weeks for the construction of up to 2,000 new illegal settlement units across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, further entrenching its illegal colonial regime and further diminishing the viability of the two-State solution on the 1967 borders.

On the very same day, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nikolay Mladenov, presented the Secretary-General's third report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), in which he reaffirmed that "Israel did not cease all settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and fully respect all of its legal obligations in this regard as called for by the resolution". He further stated that "since 20 June, Israel's illegal settlement activities have continued at a high rate, a consistent pattern over the course of this year" and that "activity during this period was concentrated primarily in occupied East Jerusalem, where plans were advanced for over 2,300 housing units in July, 30 per cent more than for the whole of 2016".

Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) was unequivocally clear in reaffirming that the "establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-State solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace". Despite this and the fact that resolution 2334 (2016) also reiterated the Council's "demand that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in



the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and that it fully respect all of its legal obligations in this regard", in word and in deed, Israel remains in deliberate contempt of the Council, blatantly rejecting the calls to cease its illegal actions and to take steps to reverse the negative trends on the ground that are imperilling the two-State solution.

In tandem and as part of this unlawful settler colonization campaign, Israel also continues to impose measures of collective punishment against the entire Palestinian population living under its half-century military occupation. In the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, home demolitions and home evictions continue, forcibly displacing hundreds of civilians, including children, with grave humanitarian impact. In our letter of 11 August 2017 (A/ES-10/760-S/2017/704), we called upon the international community to mobilize to stop the eviction of the Shamasna family, who had been residing in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood of occupied East Jerusalem since 1964. Unfortunately, the calls were not heeded and, on 5 September 2017, the family of eight, including a wheelchair-bound 84-year-old grandfather, Ayyoub, and a 75-year-old grandmother, Fahamiya, were forcibly removed by the Israeli occupying forces. As noted by Mr. Mladenov, the Shamasna home is located in a section of the neighbourhood in which several settlement plans were among those promoted in July, further exposing the cynical schemes behind such illegal and inhumane actions.

The Shamasna family's plight is reflective of that tragically endured by thousands of Palestinian families under decades of Israel's systematic dispossession and displacement of the Palestinian civilian population. One of the family members, a 15-year-old boy, Nizar, was set to go to his first day back at school on the day of his family's eviction. At approximately 5.30 a.m., a large number of Israeli forces descended on the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood. A traumatized Nizar recalled to reporters and civil society activists witnessing this tragedy: "They took everything: my schoolbag, our clothing, my grandfather's identity card", and "it was heartbreaking to be thrown out in the street without being able to defend yourself". Moreover, as noted by the spokesperson for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Christopher Gunness, "the members of the Shamasna family are long-standing Palestine refugee residents in East Jerusalem, which is occupied territory and affected by continued settlement expansion contrary to international law. It is a matter of deep concern that Palestine refugees who have already endured multiple displacements should be subject to the humiliation of the kind inflicted by forced evictions".

Besides the forced eviction of the Shamasna family, Mr. Mladenov conveyed in the report to the Security Council that eviction proceedings are under way for some 180 Palestinian families in East Jerusalem, more than 60 of whom reside in Sheikh Jarrah. While calling for immediate justice for the Shamasna family in that they be allowed to return to their family home and be compensated for the physical, mental and emotional trauma of being illegally and forcefully dispossessed, forced from their home and displaced again by this cruel military occupation, we also appeal to the international community to act collectively to compel Israel to cease such illegal actions and to prevent any of the 180 other families facing forcible eviction from suffering the same fate as that of the Shamasna family.

The continuation of these evictions and demolitions of Palestinian homes and properties are seen by the Palestinian people as yet further proof of the ill intentions of this foreign colonial occupation and of the Israeli Government's total rejection of the two-State solution and the land-for-peace principle, in defiance of all relevant United Nations resolutions and the international consensus in that regard. As documented by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, since the beginning of 2017 alone, 344 Palestinian homes and properties have been

demolished by the Israeli occupying forces, a third of them in occupied East Jerusalem, displacing some 500 Palestinians. At the same time, the occupying Power has continued in the recent period to attack the Palestinian people's right to education by demolishing or confiscating three educational facilities, leaving 175 children, citing its notorious, bogus claim that they "lacked building permits", all the while knowing that it is virtually impossible for Palestinians to obtain permits from Israel.

Furthermore, Israeli settlers, mimicking the actions of the Israeli occupying forces, also continue their harassment and forced dispossession of Palestinian families. In that regard, we must recall the egregious incident that occurred on 25 July 2017, in the city of Al-Khalil (Hebron), where 15 Israeli settler families illegally occupied the family home of the Abu Rajabs despite ongoing legal proceedings over its ownership. On 27 August 2017, the Israeli Government notified its so-called High Court of Justice that it would evict the settlers within one week, but as the Special Coordinator noted, "this process has been put on hold by a temporary injunction issued by the Court". Included in the present letter are details regarding several of the above-mentioned violations and many other crimes perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in the besieged Gaza Strip, where our people continue to suffer immeasurably as a result of Israel's 10-year blockade.

The continuation of such violations, crimes and utter impunity by Israel require collective and responsible action; silence will only be exploited by the occupying Power to further its expansionist colonial plans. There must be firm condemnation of all Israeli provocations and incitement and a clear reiteration of the demand for complete cessation of settlement activities and all other violations. The international community must urgently demand Israel's compliance with international law, including humanitarian law and human rights law, and with all relevant resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), and be prepared to act to hold it accountable in case of continued non-compliance. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council's decisions cannot simply remain words on paper but must be respected and this is an obligation for every State, without exception. Contempt for the Council cannot be treated lightly or ignored, for this is done at the risk of further undermining the chances for peace and the international legal system.

In that regard, as underscored by President Mahmoud Abbas before the general debate of the General Assembly, at its seventy-second session, the two-State solution is in jeopardy and we cannot stand idly by while Israel destroys it, prolonging this conflict and obstructing a peaceful solution. As stated by the President, "we cannot as Palestinians stand still in the face of this threat targeting our national, political and social existence on our land, and endangering regional and international peace and security. We will have to take steps or look for alternatives to preserve our national existence and to keep open the horizons for peace and security". President Abbas continued:

Our choice is the two-State solution on the 1967 borders ... but if the two-State solution were to be destroyed due to the creation of a one-State reality with two systems — apartheid — from the unchecked imposition of this occupation that is rejected by our people and the world, this would be a failure, and neither you, nor we, will have any other choice but to continue the struggle and demand full, equal rights for all inhabitants of historic Palestine. This is not a threat, but a warning of the realities before us as a result of ongoing Israeli policies that are gravely undermining the two-State solution.

The crossroads before us is clear; the international community must choose between the pursuit of peace and justice or continued impunity that allows for more unilateral, illegal Israeli moves that will only further destabilize and prolong the conflict. It is long overdue for the world to stand up to the occupying Power and demand an end to this half-century occupation and flagrant disregard for international law.

The Palestinian people must finally be able to live as a free people, free from occupation, in their independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Here, we recall what the Secretary-General said on his recent visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "the international community cannot simply turn away and allow the situation to deteriorate. We have a role and a responsibility to support the parties in resolving this conflict". The Special Coordination said that "with that responsibility comes an obligation, an obligation to do what is necessary to establish a peaceful, prosperous and secure future — for Palestinians, for Israelis and for the entire region". We urge immediate and concerted efforts towards this end.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 618 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. Those letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 11 August 2017 (A/ES-10/760-S/2017/704), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Riyad Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
3 October 2017
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 27 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to convey to you the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the forty-third report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016) (S/2017/144) (S/2017/794).

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates the concerns that it raised in its previous responses to reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the aforementioned Security Council resolutions. The authors of the reports must address those concerns with great seriousness if they are to depart from the politicized manner in which previous reports were prepared and produce a report that addresses the reality of the humanitarian situation in Syria in an objective, professional and credible manner.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that the so-called international coalition must immediately halt the massacres, acts of destruction and sabotage, and violations of international law, international humanitarian law and human rights that it is committing under the pretext of countering terrorism, because they are war crimes and crimes against humanity. The number of Syrian civilians killed now stands at several thousand, while the extent of the destruction to vital infrastructure is so great that it is impossible to assess at present. The Government also stresses that Turkish regime forces must halt their attacks against the sovereignty and territorial integrity and unity of the Syrian Arab Republic, and calls upon the Security Council to fulfil its responsibility in that regard.

The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms that donors must fulfil the commitments that they have made at donor conferences. Doing so would improve humanitarian access, ensure that more assistance is available to needy Syrian civilians and help rebuild infrastructure, thereby enabling displaced persons to return to their areas once security and stability have been restored thanks to the efforts of the Syrian State. Certain States have made the financing of humanitarian work in Syria contingent on political conditions. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that doing so is contrary to the principles and rules of humanitarian work and undermines the work of the United Nations in that field.

The Syrian Government reiterates that the United Nations and its Member States must respect fully the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria, stop



supporting terrorism and armed terrorist groups, and desist from using such designations as "non-State armed opposition" and "the moderate armed opposition" that might endow those groups with some legitimacy. They should not pay heed or bow to the demands of other actors, such as the "local authorities" that the authors mention, nor should they take any measures that could under any circumstances be interpreted as recognition of or legitimizing such actors. Doing so would contravene all Security Council resolutions that emphasize the territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic and the unity of its people.

The Syrian Government reaffirms the vital role of the Syrian State and its institutions in providing various services to civilians, whether they are in areas under its control or areas where armed groups are deployed, and in facilitating the work of international humanitarian organizations. Moreover, the ongoing efforts of the State and its allies to counter terrorism has greatly improved humanitarian access, restored security and stability, and enabled displaced persons to return to many areas.

The Government regrets that the Secretariat officials continue to overuse the phrase "besieged areas" and provide misleading information in that regard in order to accuse the Syrian Government of being deliberately negligent. It is also surprised that Secretariat officials note that the inhabitants of Raqqah are besieged from within and being used as human shields by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), yet they fail to mention that armed terrorist groups are besieging civilians and using them as human shields in other areas, or that ISIL and Levant Liberation Organization (formerly the Nusrah Front) terrorists and other armed terrorist groups are laying siege to other areas, such as Dayr al-Zawr, the towns of Fu'ah and Kafra, eastern Ghutah, Idlib and others.

The United Nations must stop ignoring the fact that the unilateral coercive economic measure imposed on the Syrian people by the United States, the European Union and other States have had a catastrophic effect on the economic, social and humanitarian well-being and the health of Syrians. The Syrian Government once again calls for those measures, which violate international law and the Charter of the United Nations, to be lifted immediately.

The Syrian Government reiterates that, to date, it has approved nine individual requests from the World Health Organization (WHO) to deliver shipments of medical aid to various parts of Syria, not five requests as stated in the report.¹

The report continues to rely on sources that lack credibility, and it repeatedly and unnecessarily cites inaccurate figures and statistics with respect to such matters as the issuance of entry permits and visas, even though United Nations officials have praised the Syrian Government for the efforts it has made and its cooperation in that regard.

The Syrian Government rejects the Secretariat's continual promotion of cross-border assistance, and reiterates that such assistance is ineffective, given that most of it falls into the hands of armed terrorist groups deployed in the targeted areas. The Syrian Government reiterates that the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic is still incapable of verifying that cross-border

¹ Approved WHO requests: tuberculosis medicines for eastern Ghutah in Rif Dimashq; medical aid for Dayr al-Zawr; medical aid for Adra al-Ummaliyah, the Assad suburb, Dayr Ali, Jabal al-Ward, Manin, Qastal, Badda, Rawdah, Sa'sa', Talfita and Bludan in Rif Dimashq; medical aid for Musaymah, Qunayyah and Khabab in Dar'a; medical aid for Qadsayya, Wadi Barada and Ayn al-Fijah in Rif Dimashq; medical aid for eastern Ghutah in Rif Dimashq; medical aid for Mayadin in Dayr al-Zawr; medical aid for Ayn al-Arab in Aleppo; kidney dialysis sessions in Duma, Rif Dimashq; and medical aid for Ghutah in Rif Dimashq.

assistance is reaching its rightful beneficiaries. We remind you that the Bab al-Hawa, Bab al-Salamah and Ramtha crossings are also entry points for arms, materiel and ammunition being smuggled to armed terrorist groups in Syria. The Government strongly rejects the authors' continued bias in favour of Turkey and Jordan when discussing the delivery of cross-border assistance. The Syrian Government reiterates that the Syrian Arab Red Crescent stands ready to monitor the delivery of humanitarian assistance to its intended recipients, but the Secretariat has in the past rejected that proposal.

The Syrian Government categorically rejects any efforts to circumvent the mandate set out in Security Council resolution 2165 (2014). The Fish Khabur border crossing in Hasakah governorate is not mentioned in that resolution. Accordingly, the Government rejects any efforts by the United Nations or other international organizations to bring assistance through that crossing point or any other illegal crossing point.

The Syrian Government reiterates its stated position regarding the International Criminal Court and the calls that have been made to refer the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to that Court, and stresses that the Court is not competent to address the situation in Syria. Moreover, the Court has lost all credibility and has been transformed into a political tool that is used by certain parties to attack specific States for sordid political ends that have nothing to do with the requirements of justice. The Government also reiterates the substance of the letter dated 20 February 2017 that it sent to the Secretary-General (A/71/799) regarding the serious legal flaws in the General Assembly resolution on an International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms its long-standing position that the crisis in Syria requires a political solution based on intra-Syrian dialogue under Syrian leadership without foreign intervention and without preconditions. We remind the Secretariat that the success of the political process and any significant improvement in the humanitarian situation will depend, above all, on creating a climate conducive to a serious and non-politicized international and regional commitment to fighting terrorism and on an immediate end to the unilateral coercive economic measures being imposed on the Syrian people. The Syrian Government has played a constructive role in the success of the Astana and Geneva meetings.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic once again calls on the Security Council to compel the States that support and finance armed terrorist groups to stop providing such groups with any form of support or financing, in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions on combating terrorism and the financing thereof, in particular resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015). Compliance with and enforcement of those resolutions is the key to resolving the situation in Syria and delivering unprecedented humanitarian assistance to those in need.

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Bashar Ja'afari
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
27 September 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 27 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing regarding Security Council action to address the intensifying atrocity situation in Myanmar.

The situation of the Rohingya in Myanmar's Rakhine State has been cause for grave concern expressed by, among others, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Secretary-General has sent a letter to the Security Council urging its 15 members to press for restraint and calm and expressing concern that the violence could spiral into "a humanitarian catastrophe with implications for peace and security that could continue to expand beyond the borders of Myanmar" (see S/2017/753). It has since become increasingly clear that the atrocities being committed in Rakhine State may amount to crimes against humanity. In accordance with the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, we request all members of the Security Council to support timely and decisive action against any atrocity committed in Myanmar.

We would like to remind all Security Council members that 114 States, including 8 current members of the Security Council, have endorsed the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, as drafted by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (see annex). These 114 States expect the Security Council to take timely and decisive action aimed at preventing or ending such atrocities, and also not to vote against credible draft resolutions to the same end.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Christian Wenaweser
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 27 September 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

List of supporters of the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, as drafted by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group

114 supporters as at 15 September 2017

Albania	Holy See**	Peru
Andorra	Honduras	Philippines
Argentina	Hungary	Poland
Australia	Iceland	Portugal
Austria	Indonesia	Qatar
Bahrain	Iraq	Republic of Korea
Belgium	Ireland	Republic of Moldova
Belize	Italy*	Romania
Benin	Jamaica	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Bhutan	Japan*	Samoa
Botswana	Jordan	San Marino
Bulgaria	Kazakhstan*	Saudi Arabia
Cabo Verde	Kuwait	Seychelles
Canada	Latvia	Singapore
Central African Republic	Lebanon	Slovakia
Chad	Lesotho	Slovenia
Chile	Liberia	Somalia
Colombia	Libya	Spain
Costa Rica	Liechtenstein	State of Palestine**
Côte d'Ivoire	Lithuania	Sweden*
Croatia	Luxembourg	Switzerland
Cyprus	Madagascar	Thailand
Czechia	Malaysia	The former Yugoslav
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Maldives	Republic of Macedonia
Denmark	Malta	Timor-Leste
El Salvador	Mexico	Togo
Estonia	Monaco	Tonga
Finland	Mongolia	Trinidad and Tobago
France*	Montenegro	Tunisia
Gabon	Morocco	Turkey
Georgia	Netherlands	Tuvalu
Germany	New Zealand	Ukraine*
Ghana	Niger	United Arab Emirates
Greece	Norway	United Kingdom of Great
Grenada	Oman	Britain and Northern
Guatemala	Palau	Ireland*
Guinea	Panama	Uruguay*
Guinea-Bissau	Papua New Guinea	Vanuatu
Haiti	Paraguay	Yemen

* Permanent or current elected member of the Security Council.

** In its capacity as a non-member observer State of the United Nations.

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
27 September 2017

Original: English

**Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations
Disengagement Observer Force for the period from 17 May
to 9 September 2017****I. Introduction**

1. The present report gives an account of the activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) during the period 17 May to 9 September 2017, pursuant to the mandate contained in Security Council resolution 350 (1974) and extended in subsequent resolutions, most recently resolution 2361 (2017).

II. Situation in the area of operation and activities of the Force

2. During the reporting period, the ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic was maintained, albeit in a volatile environment attributable to the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. That is notwithstanding a number of violations of the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces (Disengagement of Forces Agreement) of 1974, which are set out below. The Syrian Arab Armed Forces and non-State armed opposition groups engaged in exchanges of heavy weapons fire in the area of separation and the area of limitation on the Bravo side. Different armed groups, including the listed terrorist group Jabhat Fath al-Sham (formerly the Nusrah Front)¹ and the Jaysh Khalid ibn al-Walid,² which pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), continued to exchange fire in the UNDOF area of operation. Inside the area of separation, the presence of the Syrian armed forces and military equipment, as well as any other armed personnel and military equipment other than that of UNDOF, is in violation of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. As underscored again by the Security Council in its resolution 2361 (2017), there should be no military activity of any kind in the area of separation.

3. In employing its best efforts to maintain the ceasefire and see that it is scrupulously observed, as prescribed in the Disengagement of Forces Agreement,

¹ In July 2016, the Nusrah Front announced that it had changed its name to Jabhat Fath al-Sham and declared that it had cut ties with Al-Qaida.

² The merger between the Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade and Harakat al Muthana was initially announced on 12 April 2016. On 24 May 2016, open sources reported that both groups were operating under the umbrella name of "Jaysh Khalid ibn al-Walid". On 20 July 2017, the group was listed by the Security Council, pursuant to annex III of resolution 2368 (2017), as being associated with ISIL or Al-Qaida.



UNDOF reports all breaches of the ceasefire line that it observes. All incidents of firing into the area of separation and across the ceasefire line, as well as the crossing by individuals of the ceasefire line, are violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. In his regular interaction with both sides, the Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNDOF continued to call upon both parties to exercise restraint and prevent any miscalculations that might lead to an escalation of the situation. That was particularly the case when responding to incidents of spillover and retaliatory fire.

4. The situation in the area of separation, particularly during the month of June, was characterized by medium- to high-intensity fighting, mainly in the central parts of the area of separation. From 24 to 30 June, heavy exchanges of fire occurred between the Syrian Arab Armed Forces and armed groups in the area of separation, in Hamidiyah al-Jadidah, Ba'th and south Gharbiyah. According to open sources, the fighting occurred in the context of an unsuccessful offensive launched by armed groups, with the aim of capturing Ba'th. The intensity of the fighting decreased in the latter half of the reporting period. After 30 June, combat activity continued in central parts of the area of separation, but at a reduced level.

5. There were five incidents of spillover fire across the ceasefire line during the reporting period. On 24 June, UNDOF observed artillery rounds impacting west of the ceasefire line, approximately 2 kilometres north of UNDOF position 22. The artillery impacts encompassed three separate spillover incidents. It was not possible to send investigation teams at that time owing to the prevailing security situation. On 26 June, UNDOF observed an ammunition round impacting inside Camp Ziouani, prompting UNDOF personnel to move temporarily into bunkers. An investigation team from UNDOF concluded that the spillover fire was likely caused by a projectile of 12.7 mm to 30 mm calibre. The assessment of the investigation team was that the probable point of origin of the projectile was from the north-east across the ceasefire line. On 30 June, UNDOF observed one high explosive impact across the ceasefire line in close proximity to Camp Ziouani. UNDOF personnel had to also temporarily take shelter in bunkers following the incident. As with the spillover incidents of 24 June, it was not possible to launch an investigation of that particular incident owing to the intense combat activity in the area. The spillover fire incidents exposed UNDOF personnel to risk and were a serious threat to their safety and security.

6. According to open sources, the Israel Defense Forces responded to the spillover fire incidents, which occurred from 24 to 30 June, with retaliatory fire across the ceasefire line. UNDOF was unable to confirm any retaliatory fire or firing across the ceasefire line by the Israel Defense Forces. Syrian officials claimed that the Syrian Arab Armed Forces were not responsible for the firing of any artillery rounds or ammunitions across the ceasefire line and that they were concerned that the Israel Defense Forces were assisting armed groups with their ongoing offensive against the Syrian Arab Armed Forces. Syrian officials also claimed that armed groups were taking advantage of the technical fence while firing at Syrian Arab Armed Forces locations.

7. On 6 July, a small-arms firing incident was reported as impacting close to an Observer Group Golan/UNDOF patrol near a temporary observation post (post 127) in the Mount Hermon complex area. Four unidentified persons with weapons were observed by the patrol south-west of the temporary observation post. A rapid reaction group of the Nepalese contingent based in the Mount Hermon complex was dispatched to the area and the patrol was safely extracted to the Hermon Base position. On 19 July, a similar incident was reported, in which up to 900 rounds of small arms fire were fired during what appeared to be a clash between the armed groups and the Syrian Arab Armed Forces. Two small-arms impacts were observed

close to the Observer Group Golan/UNDOF patrol positioned at temporary observation post 127 at that time. Similar to the incident of 6 July, the patrol was successfully extracted from the scene with the assistance of the Nepalese rapid reaction group and relocated to the Hermon Base position. UNDOF temporarily suspended patrolling to post 127 and utilized new temporary patrolling sites in order to mitigate the security risk to its personnel.

8. During the reporting period, there were 51 reports of aircraft detection and sighting in the area of separation and areas of limitation. UNDOF did not observe specific Israeli or Syrian air strikes in the area of separation and areas of limitation, but that does not indicate that such activity did not occur. On 24 June, UNDOF observed one fighter jet over the Bayt Jinn pocket and six high explosive impacts in the same general area. On 26 June, UNDOF heard a propeller engine aircraft, assessed as an unmanned aerial vehicle, circling at high altitude, in the vicinity of Qunaytirah. On 28 June, an aircraft suspected to be a fighter jet was observed in the vicinity of Camp Faouar. At that time, three heavy explosions were heard approximately 5 kilometres from the direction of the Camp. On 7 September, open sources reported that Israeli warplanes hit a military research facility outside the city of Hama, killing two Syrian Arab Armed Forces personnel. Open sources indicated that Israel declined to confirm responsibility for the missile strike but stated that it wanted to prevent the transfer of weapons that could be used to launch rocket attacks in the Israeli-occupied Golan.

9. The presence of berms or earthworks in the area of separation remained a concern for UNDOF throughout the reporting period. A berm over 2 kilometres long appears to be facilitating movement in the corridor between Hamidiyah al-Jadidah and Jubbata al-Khashab. The berm crosses the ceasefire line in at least one location and is used by armed groups. On 23 May, UNDOF observed armed personnel, possibly belonging to unidentified armed groups, conducting reconnaissance of areas in the vicinity of former occupied United Nations position 60A. On the same night, UNDOF observed a medium-sized bulldozer conducting earth works in the vicinity of the same position. Such activities continued until 8 June, and it is the assessment of UNDOF that a new berm has been constructed in the area. During the reporting period, UNDOF observed an increase in operational activities by armed groups in close proximity to the Israeli technical fence and the ceasefire line, utilizing the berms for tactical cover. From 24 to 30 June, UNDOF observed an M46 (a towed artillery gun), assessed as belonging to unidentified armed groups, positioned approximately 400 metres from observation post 51 and approximately 50 metres east of the ceasefire line, near former United Nations position 60A. UNDOF maintains its assessment that military operational activities by armed groups, including the practice of firing in close proximity to the ceasefire line and the technical fence, are a deliberate attempt to avoid retaliatory fire from the Syrian Arab Armed Forces. The activity has the potential to draw fire toward the ceasefire line, placing civilians and United Nations personnel on the Alpha side at increased risk.

10. UNDOF continued to observe, on a daily basis, the crossing of the ceasefire line by civilians, primarily shepherds, from the Bravo side to the Alpha side. Instances of interaction between Israel Defense Forces personnel and individuals from the Bravo side also continued to be observed in the vicinity of Mount Hermon and observation post 54. UNDOF cannot confirm or verify the nature of the interaction, which typically involves unidentified individuals from the Bravo side with unloaded mules being observed approaching the Israeli technical fence and returning to the Bravo side with mules carrying unidentified supplies. The Israel Defense Forces has maintained that such interactions are of a humanitarian and medical nature.

11. In the context of the ongoing Syrian conflict, clashes in the northern part of the areas of separation and limitation on the Bravo side continued in the vicinity of Hadar and Tall al-Hamidiyah, also known as the "Castle", which remains contested. During the reporting period, fighting also continued in the Bayt Jinn pocket, consisting of the towns of Bayt Jinn, Mazra'at Bayt Jinn and Mughr al-Mir. The armed groups at the Castle were observed directing heavy machine gun fire towards the Syrian Arab Armed Forces in Hadar. Heavy explosive impacts were also seen and heard in the vicinity of Ufaniyah and Jubbata al-Khashab during the period. UNDOF noticed a spike in military combat activity towards the end of the reporting period, with more than 70 high explosive impacts and heavy machine gun fire heard north-east of Camp Faouar on 30 August. The assessment was that the combat activity was emanating from the Bayt Jinn region. On 8 September, armed groups in the Bayt Jinn pocket and at the Castle reportedly launched an offensive against pro-Government forces in Hadar, in an unsuccessful attempt to connect the two areas held by the armed groups. Relative to other periods within the present reporting cycle, United Nations personnel observed an increase in combat activity on 8 and 9 September. The increase in military operations in that area by armed groups is a matter of concern, particularly as UNDOF is planning the reoccupation of former United Nations positions, including observation post 71, in the context of its ongoing incremental return to Bravo side operations. UNDOF regularly observed armed individuals in the vicinity of observation post 71 throughout the reporting period.

12. The Mount Hermon complex remained relatively stable throughout the reporting period, with the exception of the firing incidents of 6 July and 19 July, described in paragraph 7, that directly affected the Observer Group Golan personnel. There has been an increase of transborder movements of unidentified individuals, likely due to more favourable weather conditions during the summer months, compared with the previous reporting period, and 42 crossings were observed. In a new pattern, the movements involved women and children.

13. The fighting between armed groups and the Syrian Arab Armed Forces in the central parts of the areas of separation and limitation on the Bravo side has decreased since June and has generally remained at low levels. According to open sources, a suspected improvised explosive device attack carried out by a suicidal individual targeted a building in Khan Arnabah on 16/17 June. Open sources reported that the alleged attack resulted in the killing of a senior member of pro-government forces. UNDOF was not able to confirm the attack. Elsewhere, firing continued to be observed along the front lines in the vicinity of Syrian Arab Armed Forces positions towards positions held by armed groups in south Gharbiyah, Qunaytirah, Umm Batinah and the contested area of Samdaniyah.

14. In the southern part of the areas of separation and limitation on the Bravo side, which remain for the most part under the control of non-State armed groups, including those listed by the Security Council as terrorist groups, fighting between Jaysh Khalid ibn al-Walid, on one side, and the Free Syrian Army and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, on the other side, has continued and, according to open sources, was concentrated around the contested area of Tasil. On 5 July, the fighting intensified, with high explosive impacts heard in the vicinity of observation post 54 and United Nations position 80. Open sources reported that the southern front factions of the Free Syrian Army launched an offensive targeting Jaysh Khalid ibn al-Walid-held areas in the south. However, the offensive did not result in a change in the front lines. On 28 and 29 August, the Free Syrian Army reportedly launched another offensive against the Jaysh Khalid ibn al-Walid, which resulted in the reporting of a large number of high explosions. On nine occasions, UNDOF observed mine harvesting by unidentified personnel in the area of separation close to the ceasefire

line, including a large volume of mines recovered in the southern part of the area of separation.

15. On 2 September, UNDOF received reports from Syrian officials purporting that the Israel Defense Forces had encroached into the area of separation in the vicinity of Burayqah and were conducting activity in the area. UNDOF consulted with Israeli officials who confirmed that the Israel Defense Forces did have forces operating in four armoured personnel carriers in an area east of the Israeli technical fence but west of the ceasefire line in the vicinity of Burayqah. Acting upon available information, UNDOF was unable to confirm that a violation had occurred. Both sides were advised of the outcome of the UNDOF inquiry.

16. The military violations on the Alpha side included 95 reports of M109 self-propelled guns, Iron Dome systems, missile carriers, light armoured vehicles and armoured patrol vehicles within the 10-kilometre zone, which are considered unauthorized personnel and military equipment in the areas of limitation. There were three incidents of firing into the area of separation and more than 87 restrictions of movement of UNDOF by the Israel Defense Forces recorded during the reporting period. On 24 July, observation post 53 observed one Israel Defense Forces soldier firing five shots to the east and in the general direction of a shepherd who was west of the ceasefire line. On 17 August, observation post 51 observed Israel Defense Forces personnel firing single shots into the area of separation and in the direction of shepherds who were in the area of separation but east of the Alpha line. On 31 August, observation post 51 observed an Israel Defense Forces soldier firing his rifle into the area of separation in the direction of a shepherd who had crossed the Alpha line. On the Bravo side, violations involved shepherds and other civilians crossing the Alpha line, which continue to occur frequently. The violations were protested to the parties. UNDOF also protested all violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement that it observed to both parties, including the presence of unauthorized equipment in the area of separation and firing into the area of separation.

17. Of particular concern is the frequency and number of restrictions of UNDOF movements imposed by the Israel Defense Forces, which have increased considerably relative to the previous reporting period. Restriction of movement has a negative impact on the ability of UNDOF to conduct its mandated tasks. Engagement between UNDOF and the Israel Defense Forces continues to endeavour to reduce delays and challenges experienced by United Nations personnel in crossing through the technical fence to United Nations observation posts and positions. During the reporting period, the Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNDOF continued to remind the parties of their obligation to scrupulously abide by the terms of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement, to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel on the ground and to extend all cooperation to UNDOF in the fulfilment of the tasks that it is obligated to fulfil under its mandate.

18. During the reporting period, UNDOF observed several locations where 472 tents and other structures appeared to have been set up for internally displaced persons in the area of separation and in its proximity. The number of people in the camps could not be ascertained and appeared to fluctuate. However, the population in the camps appeared to increase when the villages in the vicinity of the camps were subjected to heavy bombardment. Owing to the closure of the established crossing point at Qunaytirah between the Alpha and Bravo side, since late August 2014, UNDOF remains unable to facilitate, in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, humanitarian crossings, including for students, between the two sides.

19. Since its temporary relocation from a number of positions in September 2014, and pending its full return to the area of separation, UNDOF has continued to maintain visibility, albeit limited, of the area of separation and the ceasefire line from its positions on Mount Hermon, Camp Faouar, position 80 in the southern part of the area of separation and position 22 on the Alpha side. UNDOF operations continued to be supported by United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) military observers in Observer Group Golan, who are under the operational control of UNDOF and have maintained five fixed and four temporary observation posts along the Alpha line. The focus of the activities of Observer Group Golan was on continuous static observation and situational awareness. Observer Group Golan-Damascus also continued operations on Mount Hermon, following their resumption of activities on 8 May, as indicated in my previous report (S/2017/486).

20. Through Observer Group Golan, UNDOF continued to carry out fortnightly inspections of equipment and force levels in the area of limitation on the Alpha side. Liaison officers from the Alpha side accompanied the inspection teams. Inspections in the area of limitation on the Bravo side remained suspended owing to the security situation.

21. UNDOF, in consultation with both parties, continued to review the situation in the area of separation to assess whether the conditions on the ground permitted the continuation of the incremental return to vacated positions in the area of separation. In that regard, UNDOF leadership conducted several reconnaissance missions to former United Nations positions and observation posts on the Bravo side, including to Camp Faouar, observation posts 52, 56, 71 and 72 and positions 10, 16 and 25. The UNDOF Force Commander also continued his frequent visits and inspections of Camp Faouar and Mount Hermon on the Bravo side.

22. During the reporting period, UNDOF continued to make progress towards the limited return to Bravo side operations in line with the phased UNDOF plan. Phase I of the plan has continued to progress satisfactorily since 14 November 2016, when UNDOF re-established an initial presence at Camp Faouar, and conditions have steadily improved in line with the mission support plan. The building of key infrastructure and accommodation has continued. From an operational perspective, the security and defence of the Camp have been continuously practised and all deployed elements have been integrated into a cohesive and effective component with clear command and control. The seven armoured personnel carriers that deployed to UNDOF in March 2017 (see S/2017/486, para. 26) form an integral part of the enhanced force protection and mobility required for current UNDOF operations, particularly in position 80 in the southern part of the area of operation. The deployment of the mechanized infantry company from Nepal, which was initially planned for July, began on 5 September with the arrival of an advance party and is expected to be complete before the end of September 2017. That will signal the activation of phase 2 of the plan, which will involve the resumption, conditions permitting, of limited patrols in the northern part of the area of separation. That deployment will further enhance force protection and improve situational awareness and observation measures.

23. In accordance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 2361 (2017), efforts continued to deploy appropriate technology to ensure the safety and security of UNDOF personnel and equipment. Heavier reliance on modern technology is required in view of the prevailing and fluid security situation on the Bravo side. In that regard, UNDOF has initiated the procurement of technology, such as surveillance trailers, to enhance force protection and increase situational awareness. Surveillance trailers have been deployed on the Alpha side to Camp Ziouani and to observation post 22 and are fully operational. A training programme has been initiated on the use of the equipment by UNDOF personnel. Additional surveillance trailers are expected to be deployed in other United Nations posts along the Alpha

side, following an internal after-action review of the initial deployment by UNDOF. A surveillance trailer has also been deployed in Camp Faouar on the Bravo side and will be operational soon. In addition, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat shared in July 2017 the technical specifications of a "sense and warn" system with the Government of Israel and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, and looks forward to further engagement with the parties on the matter. The Security Council will be updated as necessary on progress made and challenges encountered in that respect.

24. Since the commencement of phase 1 in November 2016, no adverse reaction to the return of UNDOF to Camp Faouar has been perceived. No deliberate actions have been taken by any armed groups to threaten the presence of UNDOF on the Bravo side. At the same time, continued military activities in the area of separation and area of limitation still pose risk to UNDOF. The mission will continue to monitor the situation so as to ensure effective force protection and the safety and security of UNDOF personnel.

25. Conditions permitting, phase 2 will include, over a period of six to eight months, an initial phase of limited patrolling by the mechanized infantry company from Camp Faouar into the northern part of the area of operation. The movement of the UNDOF and Observer Group Golan headquarters from Damascus to Camp Faouar, as well as the movement of the Force Reserve Company from Camp Ziouani to Camp Faouar, are envisaged in phase 3. That phase will also involve the refurbishment of physical infrastructure and security preparations for the reoccupation of select observation posts in the area of separation. The plans also include consideration of the requirements for the reoccupation of observation post 52, including in terms of situational awareness and security aspects. Observer Group Golan military observers would not be deployed at observation posts on a permanent basis until security conditions allow and adequate accommodation is in place.

26. UNDOF continued to resupply its positions on Mount Hermon and Camp Faouar from Damascus. UNDOF convoys between Damascus and United Nations positions were conducted almost daily, with a security escort from UNDOF accompanied by a liaison officer from the Syrian Arab Armed Forces. On 6 September, open sources reported that two unidentified persons were killed by an improvised explosive device on the road to Mashara town, close to main supply route 7. UNDOF continuously monitors the situation and takes necessary precautionary measures in planning and conducting its convoys along that route. UNDOF continued to conduct and update its contingency planning for the reinforcement and evacuation of United Nations positions and observation posts and for the relocation and evacuation of United Nations personnel on both the Alpha and Bravo sides, as well as in Damascus. The implementation of risk mitigation, including force protection measures recommended in the military capability study of UNDOF, continued at observation posts, positions and the operational base at Camp Ziouani.

27. UNDOF closely followed the developments related to the de-escalation zone in the south-west part of the Syrian Arab Republic, which was established in accordance with an agreement reached on 9 July between Jordan, the Russian Federation and the United States of America. Given the potential overlap between the de-escalation zone and the UNDOF area of operation, the UNDOF Head of Mission and Force Commander maintained contact with relevant interlocutors to seek clarity with regard to arrangements envisaged under the agreement and their potential implications for UNDOF. During such contacts with Syrian and Russian officials in the Syrian Arab Republic, UNDOF understood that the deployment of Russian military police had taken place in proximity to Bayt Jinn and south of Jaba in the area of limitation on the Bravo side. Liaison is being pursued, with the aim of facilitating the Force's freedom of movement and the discharge of its mandate,

including as it relates to reporting on military activity in the area, as well as to the safety and security of United Nations personnel.

28. As at 9 September, UNDOF comprised 829 troops, including 30 women. Troops are currently deployed from Bhutan (3), Czechia (2), Fiji (300), Finland (2), India (204), Ireland (136), Nepal (180) and the Netherlands (2). In addition, 77 military observers from UNTSO/Observer Group Golan, including 8 women, assisted the Force in carrying out its tasks.

III. Implementation of Security Council resolution 338 (1973)

29. In its resolution 2361 (2017), the Security Council called upon the parties concerned to immediately implement its resolution 338 (1973), decided to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a further period of six months, until 31 December 2017, and requested the Secretary-General to report every 90 days on developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement resolution 338 (1973). The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, in particular the efforts made at various levels to implement resolution 338 (1973), is addressed in my report on the situation in the Middle East (A/72/333), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 71/24 on the Syrian Golan and 71/25 on Jerusalem.

30. Since the discontinuation of indirect peace talks in December 2008, there have been no negotiations between the parties. The Syrian conflict is further reducing the prospects for their resumption and for progress towards peace between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic. I look forward to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and the resumption of efforts towards a comprehensive, just and durable peace settlement, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 338 (1973) and other relevant resolutions.

IV. Observations

31. I note with grave concern the recent escalation of military activity across the ceasefire line, and in particular the incidents of spillover and retaliatory fire that occurred between 24 and 30 June, which posed significant risks to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement, as well as to the safety and security of UNDOF personnel. All military engagements between the parties to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement are serious cause for concern and have the potential to escalate tensions and jeopardize the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. I encourage the members of the Security Council to support efforts to sensitize both parties and regional stakeholders to the risks of such escalation, and the need to preserve the long-standing ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic.

32. As previously reported by UNDOF, the Israel Defense Forces hold the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic responsible for any spillover fire incidents to the Alpha side, regardless of the point of origin of the fire. It remains critical that the parties maintain their liaison with UNDOF in the first instance to prevent any escalation of the situation across the ceasefire line. It is not acceptable for UNDOF to be reliant on open sources to determine the extent of a deliberate violation of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. All violations of the ceasefire line, such as those that occurred during the period from 24 to 30 June, increase tensions between the signatories of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. For its part, the United Nations will maintain its efforts to ensure that the long-standing ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic continues to hold.

33. I remain gravely concerned by the prevailing security situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, its impact on the Syrian population and its implications for the

stability of the wider region. The continued fighting on the Bravo side between the Syrian Arab Armed Forces and armed groups, and between different armed groups, including listed terrorist groups, such as Jabhat Fath al-Sham, and ISIL affiliates, such as Jaysh Khalid ibn al-Walid, in the southern part of the areas of separation and limitation on the Bravo side, as well as the possibility of retaliatory fire by the Israel Defence Forces across the ceasefire line, jeopardize the long-term ceasefire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic and continue to significantly affect the UNDOF area of operation. The construction of earth berms by armed groups close to the Israeli technical fence and the increasing trend of operational activity conducted by armed groups in close proximity to the technical fence and ceasefire line is a cause of concern to UNDOF owing to the serious risk of escalation between the two parties such activity entails.

34. The presence of the Syrian armed forces and unauthorized military equipment in the area of separation are violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. The continued use of heavy weapons by the Syrian Arab Armed Forces and armed groups in the ongoing Syrian conflict is disturbing and continues to significantly impede the successful implementation of the UNDOF mandate. I note that, while there is a reduction in the levels of firing in the northern part of the UNDOF area of operation, listed terrorist groups and other armed groups continue to maintain control over significant sections of the areas of separation and limitation in the UNDOF area of operation on the Bravo side. The established crossing between the Alpha and Bravo sides remains closed.

35. There should be no military forces in the area of separation other than those of UNDOF. I call upon all parties to the Syrian conflict to cease military actions throughout the country, including in the UNDOF area of operation, and to remove all military equipment and all armed personnel from the area of separation.

36. The Israel Defense Forces should refrain from firing across the ceasefire line. The firing across the ceasefire line by the Israel Defense Forces has the potential to escalate tensions between the two sides. The continued presence of unauthorized weapons and equipment in the area of limitation on the Alpha side is also of concern.

37. Interaction and perceived interaction between the Israel Defense Forces and unidentified individuals from the Bravo side, including in the area of Mount Hermon, has the potential to lead to clashes between armed elements and the Syrian Arab Armed Forces. I reiterate my call to both parties to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement regarding the requirement to maintain stability in the area. All military activities in the area of separation conducted by any actor pose a risk to the ceasefire and to the local civilian population, in addition to the United Nations personnel on the ground. I call upon all parties to take all measures necessary to protect civilians.

38. As UNDOF consolidates its presence at Camp Faouar and continues its efforts to intensify its operations in the area of separation, it remains critical that the safety and security of United Nations personnel be assured. The circumstances under which the troops and military observers are operating remain complex and challenging, and require continued vigilance and risk mitigation measures. I renew my call on the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to fulfil its primary responsibility for the safety and security of United Nations personnel in the areas of separation and limitation on the Bravo side. I also renew my call on countries with influence to strongly and urgently convey to the armed groups in the UNDOF area of operation the imperative to cease any action in violation of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement, bearing in mind that such actions also jeopardize the safety and security of United Nations personnel, and to respect the freedom of United Nations personnel to carry out their clear and important mandate safely and securely. The safety and security of United Nations personnel must be ensured.

39. Both Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic have stated their continued commitment to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and support for the presence of UNDOF in calling for a return to vacated positions in the area of separation. The full return of UNDOF to the area of separation remains a priority for the mission. In the next phase (phase 2) of the limited return to Bravo side operations, conditions permitting, the ongoing deployment of a Nepalese mechanized infantry company, due to be complete by the end of September 2017, will enable UNDOF to commence limited patrolling from Camp Faouar into the northern part of the area of separation. I count on the continued cooperation of both parties with UNDOF in order for the mission to advance its planning for the incremental return to operations and positions in the area of separation. As a matter of priority, the technology and equipment necessary to enhance the UNDOF observation of the area of separation and the ceasefire line, and to improve force protection, remain critical. In that regard, the support and cooperation of both Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic in ensuring that the deployment of the necessary technology equipment happens seamlessly and expeditiously is essential. At the same time, the parties must continue to support the enhancement of the liaison function of UNDOF.

40. I encourage the continued dialogue between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the UNDOF Head of Mission and Force Commander with the relevant Member States on the de-escalation zone in the south-west part of the Syrian Arab Republic, with the primary aim of maintaining confidence in and continued support for the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and the safety and security of UNDOF activities and operations in support of the Agreement.

41. It is equally important that the Security Council continue to bring to bear its influence on the parties concerned to ensure that UNDOF is accorded the ability to operate in a safe and secure manner, and is allowed to operate freely, in accordance with the protocols to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. As long as the area of separation remains militarized and the presence of armed groups and/or the Syrian Arab Armed Forces continues, UNDOF will only fulfil its mandate in a limited manner. It is essential that this issue be addressed by the parties to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and in the wider framework of the Syrian political process. Furthermore, the reopening of the regular crossing point established at Qunaytirah would benefit the ability of UNDOF to implement its mandate. It is also necessary for UNDOF to continue to have at its disposal all means and resources necessary for it to return fully to the area of separation, conditions permitting.

42. The confidence and commitment of troop-contributing countries in UNDOF remains a key factor in the mission's ability to carry out its mandate. I continue to count on the support of troop-contributing countries as UNDOF proceeds along the agreed strategy with its planning, including in relation to the augmentation of required capabilities, in preparation for the envisaged increased operations in the area of separation. I am grateful to the Governments of Bhutan, Czechia, Fiji, Finland, India, Ireland, Nepal and the Netherlands for their contributions, their commitment, their resolve and their consummate professionalism. I am also thankful to the Member States contributing military observers to UNTSO.

43. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the Head of Mission and Force Commander, Major General Jai Shanker Menon, and the military and civilian personnel serving under his leadership, who continue to perform the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council with efficiency and commitment under challenging circumstances.

Annex

